



Howard County

George Howard Building
3430 Court House Drive
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043-4392

Dr. Calvin Ball
Councilmember
District 2
cbball@howardcountymd.gov

Special Assistant: Kim Pruim
District Aide: Najee Bailey

March 8, 2018

Honorable Thomas M. Middleton, Chairman
Finance Committee
3 East
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: SUPPORT –Senate Bill 543 and House Bill 664, “Labor and Employment – Payment of the Minimum Wage Required (*Fight for Fifteen*)”

Dear Chairman Middleton:

I am writing in support for Senate Bill 543 (SB 543) and House Bill 664 (HB 664), Labor and Employment – Payment of the Minimum Wage Required or more commonly referred to as our “Fight for Fifteen”. Collectively, we can accomplish a lot by working to reduce the economic and wage disparity between our jurisdictions and passing a statewide minimum wage increase.

Studies continue to show that as wages increase, especially for our low-wage earners, individuals are healthier, call out of work less and are more productive while at work. We must remind businesses that this is smart policy - an investment in employees is ultimately a direct investment back into their business where productivity and profits will continue to soar. And as wages rise, employees disposable income drives consumers to the store where they help boost our economy, creating even more consumer demand which in turn leads to job creation.

As a Councilmember in Howard County, I recognize we must often strike a balance between meeting the needs of the most vulnerable – those who often find it difficult to find a sustainable living and pay for the basic needs of housing, food, childcare and more; while promoting economic development and free enterprise. However, when the two converge and work in tandem, we strike a balance that allows us to invest in our residents and bolster our businesses without negatively impacting the services which draw people to live and do business in our County.

Leadership takes courage. I’m confident that promoting a living wage and supporting wealth building policies that require businesses to invest in their employees will build stronger companies. It’s good policy and I applaud the sponsors of this bill for their leadership on this important issue. Thank you to the committees for your consideration and I’m proud to lend my support for both SB 543 and HB 664.

All the best,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Dr. Calvin Ball".

Dr. Calvin Ball
Councilmember